



Notes from

HORNBAKER GARDENS

"The Princeton Perennial People"
22937 1140 N. Ave., Princeton, Illinois 61356

NEWSLETTER No. 23

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www.hornbakergardens.com

Daylily Clumps A Big Hit

Each year, we have been offering more varieties of daylilies in clump form. Instead of ordering a start of a certain variety, which will be dug in August after bloom season is over, the customer takes the entire clump. We dig it right there on the spot, drop it in a plastic bag, and the customer takes it home. The customer gets a large, mature clump, which can be planted as is, or divided into several pieces. Last year, the majority of our daylily sales were in clump form. This year, over three-fourths of the varieties

are available in clumps, although the number of clumps available for any given variety may be limited.

When we first started offering clumps, we worried that transplanting them in the middle of bloom season might be a risky thing to do. However, because our customers tend to be experienced gardeners and are diligent in caring for the plants that they purchase, they have had an incredible rate of success with these clumps. We guarantee our daylilies through the first winter, but have rarely



been asked to replace a clump that was lost.

Our advice to those who plan to keep the clump whole is to plant it and water it well as soon as possible. If the clump will not be planted for a day or so, the roots should be kept very moist and the clump should be kept out of the sun. After the clump is plant-

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Long Blooming Blues

We have been amazed at how long *Nepeta* 'Walker's Low' has been blooming so far this year. It started blooming around the first of May, and is still going strong. The soft gray-green foliage is topped with soft blue flowers that are only 10-12" tall. The information on 'Walker's Low' says that it blooms from April until frost in the fall. Apparently, the show will continue, but if it were to stop today, it would have been a great

show.

The color of both the foliage and the blooms is very similar to that of *Perovskia* (Russian Sage), another long blooming blue. Russian Sage starts blooming in July, and blooms into September, making it a great companion for *Rudbeckia* (Black-Eyed Susans), *Echinacea* (Purple Coneflower), *Sedum* 'Autumn Joy' and 'Autumn Fire', and ornamental grasses. Three varieties of

Russian Sage are available. *Perovskia atriplicifolia* is the standard form, growing to over 3 feet tall and nearly as wide. 'Longin' is similar, but has less of a spreading habit. 'Little Spire' is a shorter, more compact plant, growing to around 25 inches.

Together, *Nepeta* and *Perovskia* are sure to give you the blues all season long, but these are the kind of blues that make you happy.

Deep Soak Your Trees

Several customers have commented that, over the last winter, they lost trees that had been in the ground for several years. We lost a few ourselves. Japanese Maples and Redbuds especially seem to

have had trouble. It would appear that three years of drought is starting to take its toll on trees.

We know from have planted some trees this spring, and having dug ponds for customers, that the ground is very dry. A nice rain may saturate the top few inches of soil, but only a series of rains will get any moisture down deep where the tree roots are looking for water. We simply can't count on that happening.

We encourage you to periodically deep soak your trees, especially those that

have been planted in the last five years or so. To get the water down deep, lay a trickling hose at the base of the tree and let it run for several hours, even overnight. This will be of more benefit than will more frequent, but shallow, waterings.

Make sure that there is moisture in the ground as the trees go into winter. The dry fall that we had last year put lots of stress on many trees. Provide deep soaking in the fall if we have another dry one.

Retail Hours:

We are open Monday through Saturday, 8:00 to 5:00. We are closed Sundays, and will be closed on July 4.

Fashionably Fastigate



Certain spaces call for trees that stay narrow and won't push up against the house or neighboring plants. Trees that stay narrow are often referred to as "fastigate" in form. We had so many requests for narrow trees that we ordered in several new fastigate trees this year.

Acer 'Crimson Sentry' is a purple leafed maple that gets only 15' wide. *Liriodendron* 'Fastigiatum' is a tulip tree that grows 50' tall and only 15' wide. Evergreens include *Picea pungens* 'Iseli Fasigiate', a blue spruce that grows like a fat, steel blue cigar. *Picea abies* 'Hillside Upright' is a beautiful, dark green spire that is only five feet wide at the base. *Thuja* 'DeGroot's Spire' is an arborvitae that makes a good vertical accent, or a narrow, high screen when planted in a row.

Half Price Hosta Clumps

During Open House, we offered several varieties of hosta clumps at half price. We have decided to leave the potting wagon with these specially priced clumps in place, and will continue to refresh the wagon with more clumps throughout the season. The wagon is located next to the shade perennials, near where we store the red wagons, so check out the bargains on your next visit.

Daylilies

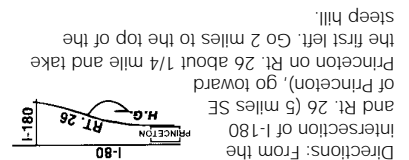
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ed and watered, some of the leaves can be trimmed back if the plant seems to want to wilt a bit. If the plant seems to be stressed severely, then the bloom stalks could be cut off, along with cutting back the foliage, although this is rarely necessary.

For those wishing to divide the clump into several pieces right away, there is little choice but to cut off all of the bloom stalks and

trim the foliage in half, and then plant the divisions. The alternative would be to plant the clump as is for now, in order to enjoy this year's blooms. Then divide the clump later, in late August or next spring.

The peak of the bloom season for us usually starts just after the 4th of July and runs through the month of July. We will be closed on July 4 and all Sundays.



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